



# NEWS RELEASE

## EUROPE REGIONAL MEDICAL COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

CMR. 442 APO AE 09042  
U.S. ARMY HOSPITAL – NACHRICHTEN KASERNE  
POSTFACH 103180 69021 HEIDELBERG, GERMANY  
DSN 371-3317/3049 TEL. 06221-7-3317/3049  
PHIL TEGTMEIER CELL – 0162-270-1578

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### ***Heidelberg Soldier wins honors at MACOM***

*Gatton named MEDCOM Equal Opportunity Advisor of Year*

*By Phil Tegtmeier  
ERMC Public Affairs Office*

**HEIDELBERG, Germany** – “In my job, everyone focuses on complaints. It’s not about complaints, it’s about (providing) solid leadership,” according to the U.S. Army Medical Command’s recently named Equal Opportunity Advisor of the Year for 2006, Sgt. 1st Class Kevin E. Gatton.

The Europe Regional Medical Command’s EOA, who works out of Nachrichten Kaserne here explained that he views his job as one of education, of giving leaders the tools and knowledge they need to effectively lead a diverse Army.

“Getting people to talk to each other is the key to running an effective equal opportunity program, Gatton said. When groups can open and maintain a dialogue, they can resolve difficulties that may arise from cultural and ethnic differences, he said.

Gatton, who will now compete for Army-wide honors, credits his supporters with any success he has had as an EOA.

“It’s like the deck was stacked in my favor because I had so much support,” Gatton said. “I get a lot of support from the EO staff at U.S. Army, Europe because I handle about a brigade’s worth of Soldiers who stayed in Germany when the 30th Medical Brigade deployed to Iraq for a year. And, I got all kinds of support from MEDCOM headquarters as well as from the leaders in ERMC headquarters.

According to the ERMC senior enlisted advisor, Command Sgt. Maj. James E. Diggs, there’s good reason to support Gatton’s efforts.

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“We’re a mirror image of society and must remain vigilant on consideration of others, race relations and cultural diversity,” Diggs said. “Sergeant First Class Gatton is the drum major who advocates fairness and consideration of others regardless of race, creed, religion and gender. This leader is passionate about his duties and always pursues ways to improve on equal opportunity training, cultural observances and ways to mitigate diversity stumbling blocks.”

To win the title of MEDCOM EOA of the year, Gatton submitted a packet including a biography, an official photo and a narrative of his accomplishments during the year. A board of senior MEDCOM officers convened in San Antonio, Texas, to select Gatton from among six other candidates from regional medical commands around the world.

According to Sgt. Maj. Janie McCoy, MEDCOM’s senior EOA, each of the candidates had to document their performance against four broad criteria:

- Must have displayed outstanding leadership qualities required of an NCO that distinguishes him/her as a leader and must have made significant contributions to the human relations and equal opportunity programs, which directly impacted the readiness of the organization and the Army.
- Made visible and significant contributions to organization and community in the areas of human resources and military service, resulting in positive relationships.
- Supported the full integration and promotion of minorities and women within the Army, the community, and the Armed Services as a whole.
- Supported the advancement of fairness, equality, dignity, and respect for the Soldiers, family members, and civilians of the command.

“Sergeant First Class Gatton reflected all of (those qualities) in his nomination packet,” McCoy said. “The EOAs are to be proactive as opposed to reactive,” she added, saying that Gatton had taken on additional missions that clearly showed he was not sitting back.

“Although it is often a thankless job it is the quite professionals that get it done such as in the case with SFC Gatton, McCoy said.